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Arabic Language Literary Heritage in the Works of Central Asian Thinkers in the 10th-12th Centuries

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Abstract

In the 10th-12th centuries there had been a rapid flourishing of literary creativity in the Arabic language in the regions of Central Asia such as Mawaraunnahr and Khwarezm. Tens of thousands of Arabic-language manuscripts have been stored in manuscript collections all over the world, including the manuscript collection of our Republic. Some of them have been selectively studied by orientalists. At the same time, the number of still unexplored manuscripts is very large, and there are manuscripts containing vivid artistic creations among them. Translating and researching of these works in order to bring the treasures of spiritual and aesthetic heritage to our people is a responsible and honorable task of Uzbek orientalists. This article expounds on the contributions of the Central Asian thinkers in the development of Arabic literature in the 10th-12th centuries, in the establishment of its genres, and the formation of its primary trends. In the article, a brief overview of the main literary works of the period and their influence on the direction of the literary development both in Central Asia and the entire world of Islam is given. The rich Arabic literature of Mawarannahr and Khwarezm spurred vibrant cultural growth locally during the first stage of the Islamic Renaissance and further development of the social and moral thought of its peoples. Abu Bakr al-Khwarezmi, Abu Ali Sina, Mahmud al-Zamakshari, and many other Central Asian thinkers combined both scientific and literary endeavors throughout their lives. During this very period, the main body of the greatest literary monuments was created. Additionally, the perspectives of a deeper study of this literary heritage as part of the world heritage and the entire human civilization are examined in this article. A comprehensive study of the Arabic literary heritage of the 9th-12th centuries may, on one hand, help to fill out the gap in the studies of the literary activities of the period. On the other hand, even though certain steps in this direction have been made, prospects of research from the position of literary studies demand a deeper exploration of literary activities, thematic categories, poetics, uniqueness of local genres, and other facets, which will help make certain the size of the contribution of Central Asian scholars to the development not only of Eastern literature but of Western as well.

Keywords: *Literary Heritage; Muslim Civilization; Arabic-Language Literature; Cultural Upsurge; Eastern Renaissance; Mawaraunnahr; Khorezm; World Literature; Human Civilization*

Introduction

Scientists, thinkers, poets and writers from Central Asia made a great contribution to the rise of the common Arab-Muslim culture in the X-XII centuries. The great scholars and brilliant writers from our

land, which the Arabs called Movarounnahr, have left an indelible mark not only on the civilization of the Muslim world, but also on the development of the entire human civilization. Scientists have conducted invaluable research in the exact sciences, history, geography, philosophy, and other fields of science. The writers took an active part in the development of artistic thinking and the formation of aesthetic taste in the genres of Arabic literature of that time - rasail, maqama, makalat, qissa, khitaba, qasida, ghazal, marsiya and others. It was through the work of these writers that Arabic literature in the Arabic language flourished from the tenth century onwards. This is because with the dissolution of the Baghdad Caliphate in the 10th century, the Samanids, the Buwayhids, the Fatimids and other independent states emerged in its former regions. The caliph in Baghdad maintained his position in the Muslim world only as a religious leader. The division of the Khilafah led to the revival of cultural life in the separated regions, the rise of scientific and literary creativity. In Movarounnahr these principles were clearly felt, especially its component was known in Khorezm. However, the Arabic language did not lose its status, as before, served as the language of science and literature, religion. Scientific and literary ties did not fade either, as copies of valuable scientific research or brilliant literary creations that appeared on one side of the Muslim world would sooner or later reach the educated circles on the other side. There are tens of thousands of manuscripts in Arabic in the world manuscript funds, including the funds of our republic, in the rare book sections of our libraries. They have been selectively studied by orientalists, especially the scientific works of our scientists. But the number of unexplored or very little studied manuscripts is still very high and they are waiting for their researcher. This includes examples of artistic creation that reflect the spirit of our spiritual and cultural heritage. The major cities of Central Asia - Samarkand, Bukhara, Shosh, Gurganch and others - have become real centers of Islamic culture, where prose and poetry have flourished.

Goals and Objectives

To show examples of the literary heritage of the scholars Abu Bakr Khorezmi, Ibn Sino, Mahmud Zamakhshari, known for their famous works in both scientific and artistic work, to highlight their features and place in the Muslim Eastern civilization. To connect the tasks in the study of this literary heritage from the point of view of literature, with the study of issues such as literary processes, principles, poetics of works, system of genres of the X-XII centuries.

Methods

The article used comparative-historical, comparative-typological, scientific descriptive and classification methods.

Results and Discussions

Our great scholars Abu Bakr Khorezmi, Ibn Sino, Mahmud Zamakhshari are known not only for their scientific work, but also for their artistic work.

The famous philologist Abu Bakr Khorezmi (934-993) was also known as a writer and was famous for his works in the genre of "fraternal correspondence" - rasails, which were widespread in medieval Arabic literature. They are written in the most beautiful Arabic language - eloquence, which shows that the author has mastered the secrets of knowledge and saj. The letters were addressed to emirs and kings, ministers and clerks, contemporary writers and friends, and contained valuable information about the spirit of the times, the descriptions of celebrities, social life and the literary environment. In addition to writing traditional hymns to the rulers, the writer does not hesitate to admonish them, calls for

justice, sharply criticizes the flaws, and engages in literary debates. As an example, we cite continents from a letter he wrote in response to the Khorezm king Abu Abdullah Muhammad of the Afrighi dynasty. For example, he describes the people of Khorezm as follows: “Khorezmians are the best traders among the people. But if they hold a pen, they write, and if they raise a sword, they strike” [Abu Bakr al-Khwarizmi: 1297, p. 144]. According to him, the ruler who governs the people is “the leader of the community, the one who takes responsibility, unravels the knots, the chairman of the government, and the first on the throne” [Abu Bakr al-Khwarizmi: 1297, p. 144]. On the one hand, the poet praises the governor:

“Agar amirimga tushsa nigohim,

Boshqa amirlarga qarashga yo'qdur ishtiyoqim”.

“If it falls on my commander, I look at him,

I have no desire to look at other emirs”.

On the other hand, the writer does not hesitate to admonish the governor:

“Whoever is served by virtuous people, and then virtue itself serves him. If his work is done by the wise, then the intellect is at his disposal. How can virtuous people serve someone who is not virtuous, or how can perfect people strive for the imperfect?” [Abu Bakr al-Khwarizmi: 1297, p. 144].

Abu Bakr left behind a collection of poems, which have come down to us.

The great encyclopedist Ibn Sina (980-1037) is widely known as the author of mainly medical and philosophical works. However, the scholar also created works in the field of literature, wrote poems, short stories, valuable works of literary criticism. Ibn Sina's literary heritage has been studied almost entirely by Arab and European scholars, and in Uzbekistan, mainly in the 70s and 90s, by a well-known Arab scholar Abdusadiq Irisov, his doctoral dissertation was defended and several books were written [Irisov Abdusadyk: 1996, p. 11]. Although the Uzbek scholar has overcome the shortcomings in the study of Ibn Sina's literary heritage, as he noted, much remains to be done, and most importantly - to pass on Ibn Sina's art to the younger generation.

If we look at the works of Ibn Sina, in poetry — poems, rubais, ghazals, continents, prose — he wrote four short stories and several works of literature. In addition to lyrical poems, Ibn Sina also wrote scientific poems. They are called urjuza because the aruz is written in rajaz weight. Although the scientific poems of this kind contain a full range of poetic arts, artistic means, and other elements characteristic of Arabic poetics, they have not yet been well studied. Among such poems are “Al-Jumanat al-ilahiya” (Divine Stands) or “Urjuzat fi-l-mantiq” (logic written in Rajaz weight) which have not been translated into other languages. But Ibn Sina's poems on medical subjects, on the contrary, became very widespread and noteworthy. A lot of comments were written on them, specially studied in medical institutions. These poems embodied both scientific creativity and poetic qualities. Ibn Sina's pure lyrical poems, on the other hand, sing of intellect, knowledge and enlightenment, and call man to perfection. A copy of the “Qasidatu-n-nafs” has spread throughout the Muslim world and has caused a great deal of controversy in the scientific and literary circles. In the thematic poem, Ibn Sina expresses his attitude to the nafs, approaching it from a philosophical point of view, revealing the secrets of perfection or degradation. That is why the poem attracted the attention of individual philosophers. The masterfully written work of Ode (qasida), the effective use of various arts and techniques, made it a mature work.

In Ibn Sina's lyrical poems, the love of the homeland, its character, the longing for the homeland are combined with the love for the beloved, the happy moments are replaced by the sorrow of separation. The emotional feelings in these poems also tell of the bitter experiences of the scholar's life, such as when

the scholar Mahmud Ghaznavi fled from his homeland in exile to escape persecution. A. Irisov writes about this in his book "Hakim Ibn Sino", dedicated to the biography and works of the scholar:

A verse from the poem of Ibn Sina, in which he wrote that he could not find a place to live, has come down to us. In this byte he writes:

Men ulug' bo'lganimda katta shaharlar tor bo'lib qoldi,

Qiymatim oshganda xaridorim ham topilmay qoldi

When I was great, the big cities became narrow,

When my value increased, my buyer could not be found either

It is not difficult to see from this verse how much Ibn Sina suffered and how he lived in foreign lands" [Irisov Abdusadyk: 1992, p. 34].

In 1021, when Ibn Sina was imprisoned in the fortress of Farajan as a result of conspiracies in the city of Hamadan, he wrote the following sad lines:

Shu erga kirmagim o'zing ko'rib turganindek ma'lumu,

Lekin bu erdan chiqib ketgim shak-shubha-yu, amri maholdir (A. Irisov's translation)

As for Ibn Sina's prose, it is necessary to mention the story of Hayy ibn Yaqzan, which has been translated into many languages. It is safe to say that this work has influenced world literature. His young protagonist goes through various stages in search of knowledge, understands the world and himself on the path of life, on the way he encounters fraudulent "companions" and evil "friends". Recognizes good and bad, learns different sciences. The story reiterates that the struggle between reason and ignorance, good and evil, which takes place in human nature, has become a moral and spiritual issue, and that the only way to overcome goodness in this struggle is through knowledge and enlightenment. Hayy ibn Yaqzan is a philosophical story in which the protagonists represent certain symbols. During the development of the plot of the story, the essence of the symbols is revealed and the creative intention in the work is clarified. It is difficult to understand the purpose of the story without understanding the function of the symbols.

This story of Ibn Sina led him to write a novel of the same name by the famous Arab philosopher and physician Ibn Tufayl in the twelfth century on the other side of the Muslim world, in the region of Andalusia, which was conquered by the Arabs in the far south of Spain. Khayy ibn Yaqzan, the protagonist of Ibn Tufayl's novel, whose plot line has changed a lot, independently learns the structure of the world and the laws of life on an uninhabited island acquires knowledge and enlightenment. Ibn Tufayl's novel Khayy ibn Yaqzan, which propagated Ibn Sina's moral and aesthetic views at every step, had a great influence on classical Arabic philosophy and Western philosophy. Daniel Defoe's famous novel "Robinson Crusoe", which sings of human labor and intellect, is a vivid example of this.

Ibn Sina's story "Solomon and Ibsal" also raises important moral, ethical and spiritual issues. The only manuscript copy of this work that has survived is preserved in the manuscript fund of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan in Tashkent. The story has a very interesting plot, each of its protagonists - Ibsol, Solomon; his wife has his own character. Through their relationship, virtues such as pure love, devotion, fidelity, will, honor, and honesty are glorified, and vices such as betrayal, sexuality, restraint, injustice, oppression, and evil are condemned. This story is also rich in figurative images.

Conclusion

The literary heritage of the thinkers of the X-XII centuries was irrigated with enlightenment-mystical and philosophical ideas. Based on the plot and compositional system of fiction, these works, which had their own protagonist, were based on such noble intentions as cultivating good qualities in man, instilling knowledge and enlightenment, giving priority to the intellect, strengthening the will, directing to higher goals. Thinkers of this period from Central Asia took an active part in the formation of the cultural rise - the Eastern Renaissance, enriched human thinking and made a worthy contribution to the development of world civilization.

Dozens of other Movarounnahr Arabic-speaking poets and writers can be added to the list of writers mentioned above. The study of their works and the transmission of spiritual and aesthetic values to our people through translations is a responsible and authoritative task facing Uzbek orientalists.

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